



U.S. Department of Justice

**Stephen J. Murphy
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EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Arone McConer

**DETROIT MAN CONVICTED
ON FEDERAL FIREARMS AND NARCOTICS CHARGES**

A 37-year-old Detroit man was found guilty on March 9, 2006, by a federal jury in Detroit on charges of possession with intent to distribute cocaine base, possession with intent to distribute marijuana and possessing a firearm in connection with drug trafficking offenses, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Valerie J. Goddard, Special Agent in Charge, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Found guilty was Arone McConer a/k/a Gary Knaff. He was also convicted of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The jury deliberated for less than two hours before returning the verdict, concluding a five day trial before United States District Judge Nancy G. Edmunds.

The evidence presented at trial showed that McConer was selling crack cocaine and marijuana out of a vacant house on Lawrence street in Detroit. A search warrant executed at the premises on January 19, 2005 by a narcotics unit of the Detroit Police Department yielded 368 grams of marijuana, packaged for distribution and sale, 27.54 grams of cocaine base, as well as a Colt .38 caliber revolver. Narcotics paraphernalia, including digital scales and packaging materials was also recovered. Because of prior felony convictions, McConer was prohibited from possessing any firearms.

“This case clearly demonstrates my office’s commitment to aggressively prosecute any individuals engaged in drug trafficking in the Eastern District of Michigan, particularly armed felons,” United States Attorney Murphy said.

“Working closely with our state and local partners, the Project Safe Neighborhood initiative helps make our neighborhoods safer by getting armed drug dealers and other violent criminals with firearms off our streets. ATF is proud to be a partner in this important initiative,” SAC Goddard said.

Murphy commended the work of the agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Detroit Police in the investigation.

A sentencing date has been set for June 8, 2006. McConer faces a mandatory minimum of 10 years imprisonment.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Susan E. Gillooly.